REMARKS

In the present Amendment, claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the recitations of claims 8 and 9, and claims 8 and 9 have been cancelled, accordingly. No new matter has been added, and entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the Amendment, claims 1-2, 4-7 and 10-25 will be pending, with claims 10-25 being withdrawn from consideration.

In Paragraph No. 5 of the Action, claims 1, 2 and 4-8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,824,462 to Ashida et al. (Ashida '462).

In response, Applicants note that claim 9 has been incorporated into independent claim 1 in the present Amendment. Claim 9 was not subject to this rejection.

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the section 102(b) anticipation rejection of claims 1, 2 and 4-8 based on Ashida '462.

In Paragraph No. 6 of the Action, claims 1, 2 and 4-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being unpatentable over Ashida '462 in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0037176 to Ogino et al. (Ogino '176), U.S. Patent No. 5,885,698 to Takehana et al. (Takehana '698), and U.S. Patent No. 6,444,383 to Ikekuchi et al. (Ikekuchi '383).

Applicants submit that this rejection should be withdrawn because the cited documents do not disclose or render obvious the electrophotographic image-receiving sheet according to the present invention.

As recited in independent claim 1, the present invention relates to an image-receiving sheet for electrophotography. The image-receiving sheet includes a support and at least one

toner-image receiving layer over the support. The support has a base and a resin layer disposed on at least one side of the base. The resin layer arranged between the toner-image-receiving layer and the base contains at least one polyethylene resin having a mass-average density of 0.935 g/cm^3 or less and at least one polyethylene resin having a melt flow rate (MFR) of 11 g/10 min. or less.

Further, the toner image-receiving layer contains a thermoplastic resin in the form of a self-dispersing water-dispersible polyester resin emulsion which satisfies the following properties (1) to (4):

(1) number average molecular weight (Mn) = 5000 to 10000;

(2) molecular weight distribution (weight average molecular weight/number average molecular weight) ≤ 4;

(3) glass transition temperature (Tg) = 40°C to 100°C; and

(4) volume average particle diameter = 20 nm to 200 nm.

In contrast to the present invention, Ashida '462 does not teach or suggest that the image-receiving layer comprises a self-dispersing water-dispersible polyester resin emulsion which essentially satisfies all the properties of (1) to (4).

Ogino '176 discloses an electrophotographic transfer sheet which comprises an image-receiving sheet formed of a thermoplastic resin such as polyester (see Ogino '176, [0050]), and further discloses that the polyester is an aqueous dispersion type and has a Tg of 30°C or less, an Mn of 6,600, and a Mw/Mn ratio of 2.33 (see Ogino '176, [0101] and [0122]).

Takehana '698 discloses an electrophotographic image-receiving film comprising an image-receiving layer containing a polyester resin having a Tg of 35 °C or more, an Mn of from

1,500 to 5,000, and an Mw of from 2,500 to 15,000, wherein the polyester resin is a water-dispersible polymer (see Takenaka '698, column 5, lines 18-24, and column 6, lines 25-30).

Ikeuchi '383 discloses an image-receiving sheet for an overhead projector, which comprises a substrate film, a receptor layer and a resistance control layer, wherein the receptor layer contains a polyester having an Mn of 1500-7000 and a Tg of 53°C or more (see Ikeuchi '383, FIG. 2, and column 7, lines 26-41).

Based upon the above teachings of the cited references, the Examiner is of the opinion that the present invention would have been obvious. However, the Examiner has failed to establish a prima facie case of obviousness since none of the cited references teaches a self-dispersing water-dispersible polyester resin satisfying at least the property (4) of present claim 1. To establish a prima facie case of obviousness, all limitations of the invention must be disclosed or taught by the cited references. That is not the case here.

Moreover, it is well known in the art that the glass transition temperature T_g of a polymer varies depending on factors such as the molecular weight of the polymer and its degree of crystallization. Therefore, there is no motivation to combine the aqueous dispersion type polyester of Ogino '176 which has an Mn of 6,600 and a Mw/Mn of 2.33 with the glass transition temperature of the water-dispersible polyester disclosed in Takehana '698, which has a different molecular weight than the polyester of the aqueous dispersion type polyester of Ogino '176. Furthermore, Ikeuchi '383 discloses a polyester, not a self-dispersing water-dispersible polyester resin emulsion, and thus there is also no motivation to combine the molecular weight distribution of the aqueous dispersion type polyester disclosed in Ogino '176 with the glass transition temperature of the polyester in Ikeuchi '383. Stated differently, the Examiner simply

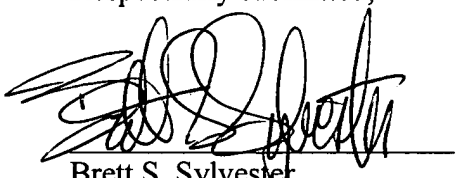
has not shown that the cited art discloses or fairly suggests a self-dispersing water-dispersible polyester resin emulsion which has the specific properties (1) to (4) recited in the present claims.

In view of the above, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the section 103 rejection of claims 1, 2 and 4-9 based on Ashida '462 in view of Ogino '176, Takehana '698, and Ikekuchi '383.

Allowance is respectfully requested. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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